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MEMORANDUM

To: Project Selection Committee

From: CMAP Staff

Date: April 2014

Re: Update on CMAQ process review

As part of its **FY 2014 staff work plan**, CMAP is reviewing how it carries out the staff functions associated with the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program (CMAQ), including project evaluation and ranking. In a **previous memo**, staff provided a general proposal for a point-based project ranking system to incorporate criteria drawn from previous work by the CMAQ modal focus groups. Staff proposes to apply these changes in the next cycle of CMAQ program development (FY 2016 – 20). Staff met with the focus groups in March to discuss their criteria; this memo characterizes the most important feedback received.

- Direct Emissions Reduction Group March 10
 - Generally speaking, members tended to rank the importance of the sensitive population measure well above the public fleets and innovation criteria. Staff will recommend point values in line with this ranking.
 - While several members voiced support for the concept, the group found it challenging to define innovation for the purpose of CMAQ programming. Zero emissions technologies were recommended for points under innovation.
 - Several members expressed the concern that giving regional priorities 20 points would weight them too heavily. Staff recommends keeping the weight for the category as it is. The purpose of setting these priorities is to encourage the implementation of these projects. The projects qualifying for these priority points are expected to be relatively few and should not crowd out other uses of funds.
 - One member proposed giving an additional 10 points for total emissions.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force March 19
 - Several members believed the criteria should include a measure of connectivity, either to destinations or to other bicycle facilities. Staff is investigating this possibility.

- The safety and attractiveness rating was judged to be the criterion that should have the most weight.
- Committee members in general disagreed with the inclusion of the innovation measure, saying that they could not specify what should be considered innovative for the Chicago region's CMAQ program nor give it particular weight. Staff's recommendation is to eliminate the criterion.
- Some members felt the transit accessibility score would negatively affect the selection of bike projects in areas were alternatives to car do not exist.

Transit service boards and RTA – late March

- The service boards and RTA were in general agreement with the criteria proposed to evaluate transit projects. There were several technical suggestions for the measurement of reliability, impact on sensitive populations, and transitsupportive land use.
- A suggestion was received to include more variation in scoring on air quality cost-effectiveness beyond a five-category rating scale.
- There was concern over the DER criterion for sensitive populations and whether projects with moving rolling stock can be accurately rated.

Regional Transportation Operations Coalition – March 27

- RTOC was in general agreement with the criteria for scoring projects, but suggested that travel time reliability be given a higher weight with the other criteria weighted equally (and lower). Staff will recommend point values in line with this ranking.
- Members were in general agreement that the innovation projects include the "direct programming" options identified by the Coalition in 2011.
- The group discussed the safety criteria at length. The Coalition suggested verifying a link between a high-crash-location and improvements proposed in a project. The Coalition also suggested switching to using IDOT's 5% Report for identifying high-crash locations. Staff will consider 5% Report data if the data become publicly available.
- RTOC felt there may be inconsistencies between congestion benefits of projects and air quality improvement cost-effectiveness rankings. Staff responded that this may be a technical issue with the formulas used to calculate air quality benefits, and may bear some scrutiny. RTOC suggested that existing data available in Intersection Design Studies be considered.
- RTOC was in general agreement with approach for scoring reliability improvement projects, except "road weather management" should be given fewer points, while signal interconnects should be given more points.
- o RTOC suggested that the evaluation consider multi-modal impacts of projects.

Staff will consider this feedback in revising the point-based ranking method for committee consideration.